

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS  
APPLY

State Dept. review completed

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE~~

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1972 SEP 16 AM 8:45 SEP 16 AM 6:50

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE 160926Z SEP 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)  
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0159 IMMEDIATE  
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER  
SECTION ONE OF THREE

REF: SAIGON 0158  
HEREWITH LETTER FROM PRESIDENT THIEU TO PRESIDENT NIXON DATED  
SEPTEMBER 16, 1972: ORIGINAL FOLLOWS BY POUCH.

MORI/CDF C05081114

SAIGON, SEPTEMBER 16, 1972  
NGYUEN VAN THIEU  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I WISH TO FIRST THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF AUGUST 31, 72 WHICH  
AMBASSADOR BUNKER HAS BROUGHT BACK TO ME.

I AM DEEPLY TOUCHED BY THE SINCERE THOUGHTS YOU HAVE EXPRESSED  
IN IT.

I UNDERSTAND FULLY YOUR THOUGHTS AND THE VIEWS YOU HAVE CONVEYED  
TO ME ON THE PEACE COUNTER-PROPOSAL WHICH WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING, WITH  
REGARD TO THE REASONS AND THE NEED FOR IT.

PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT AT ANY TIME I CONSIDER THAT THIS IS OUR  
COMMON PROBLEM ON WHICH I HAVE COLLABORATED WITH YOU THROUGH MANY  
STAGES IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS, BASED ON THE SINCERITY AND MUTUAL  
TRUST AS YOU HAVE SAID.

YOUR DECISION TO SEND DR. KISSINGER ON A SPECIAL VISIT TO VIET-NAM  
AND THE SEVERAL WEEKS OF THOROUGH WORK WITH MANY MEMORANDA EXCHANGED  
BETWEEN US AND AMBASSADOR BUNKER WILL SHOW THAT YOU AND I HAVE NOT  
CONSIDERED THE PROBLEM LIGHTLY. INSTEAD, WE BOTH WANT TO ACHIEVE THE  
ASSIGNED OBJECTIVE.

I HAVE PERSONALLY ALWAYS TRIED TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT I HAVE OFTEN  
SAID, THAT IS TO HELP YOU TO HELP ME AND TO COLLABORATE SINCERELY WITH  
YOU IN ORDER TO JOINTLY ACHIEVE THE COMMON OBJECTIVE ON A UNIFIED  
STAND.

ONCE AGAIN, I WISH TO EMPHASIZE TO YOU THAT I HAVE THOUGHT OF NOTHING ELSE BUT A JUST AND GUARANTEED PEACE FOR THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM. I CAN SAY THAT THIS IS THE SOLE OBJECTIVE I HAVE BEEN PURSUING AND MY SOLE REASON TO BE IN THIS HIGH POSITION.

TODAY, WHILE THE COMBATANTS AND PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM ARE UNITED AND STAND READY TO ACCEPT ALL SACRIFICES MORE THAN EVER BEFORE TO DEFEAT THE AGGRESSORS, I STILL TRY TO ACCOMPLISH ALL THAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN AN EQUITABLE AND REASONABLE WAY, SO THAT THE OTHER SIDE CAN ACCEPT TO SOON RESTORE THE PEACE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES, MORE THAN ANYBODY ELSE HAVE BEEN LONGING FOR.

IT BOTHERS ME VERY MUCH WHEN I SEE THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES STILL HAVE TO CONTRIBUTE TOO MUCH BECAUSE OF THE WAR IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.

IT IS FOR THE ABOVE REASONS THAT, IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS, WE HAVE MADE MANY LONG STRIDES IN MAKING REAL CONCESSIONS TO THE OTHER SIDE, ONLY WITH THE HOPE THEY WILL RESPOND WITH GOODWILL SO THAT WE CAN SOON HAVE A PEACE SOLUTION.

ON ITS PART, THE UNITED STATES HAS ALSO MADE MANY CONCESSIONS, TO THE POINT OF IMPLEMENTING ALMOST UNCONDITIONALLY WHAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE DEMANDED, SUCH AS THE CESSATION OF BOMBING OVER THE NORTH AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALMOST ALL US TROOPS, WHILE THE COMMUNISTS SIMPLY RESPONDED WITH ENTIRELY OPPOSITE AND OPENLY PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS, IN TOTAL DISREGARD FOR THE PUBLIC OPINION AND COMMON SENSE.

YOU PERSONALLY HAVE MANY TIMES REALIZED THIS FACT.

HOWEVER, WHAT I HAVE JUST POINTED OUT IS TO HELP US REVIEW WHERE WE STAND, AND NOT TO DIVERT FROM OUR ESSENTIAL OBJECTIVE OF A PROMPT SEARCH FOR PEACE OR TO ABANDON OUR EFFORTS IN THIS PATH.

THE EVIDENCE IS THAT I HAVE TRIED TO MAKE FURTHER OFFERS WHICH CAN STILL BE CONSIDERED AS LOGICAL TO BE ACCEPTED IN THE COUNTER-PROPOSAL DR. KISSINGER HAD DISCUSSED WITH ME.

THE POINTS WE HAVE AGREED ON ARE INDEED TOO FORTHCOMING, VERY REASONABLE AND LOGICAL, AND ON WHICH WE HAVE GONE TOO FAR.

WE HAVE GONE THAT FAR TO ACCEPT THOSE POINTS BECAUSE, ON ONE HAND WE CONSIDER THAT WE CAN STILL JUSTIFY THEM ON THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF

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DETERMINATION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, AND ON THE OTHER HAND WE CONSIDER THAT THOSE POINTS ARE LIABLE TO BE ACCEPTED IN THEIR PRINCIPLE AND SPIRIT BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM.

IF I MAKE A PEACE OFFER TO WHICH THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET NAM OBJECT, THEN IT WILL NOT BE USEFUL; ON THE CONTRARY, IT WILL CAUSE UNNECESSARY DISTURBANCES IN SVN AND WILL SHUT THE ROAD TO SEARCH FOR PEACE.

A PEACE SOLUTION WHICH THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DOES NOT APPROVE CANNOT BE REALIZED EITHER.

THE POINTS WHICH WE CANNOT ACCEPT AFTER MANY WEEKS OF THOROUGH ANALYSES ARE EXPLAINED FULLY IN THE MEMORANDA WE HAVE FORWARDED AND ON WHICH I BELIEVE YOU WERE BRIEFED IN DETAIL SO THAT YOU UNDERSTAND US MORE THOROUGHLY.

**TOP SECRET SENSITIVE**

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72 SEP 16 AM 8 10

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1972 SEP 16 AM 9 13

T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 160926Z SEP 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)  
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0159 IMMEDIATE  
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER

SECTION TWO OF THREE

I SHARE YOUR VIEWS AND UNDERSTAND YOU WELL IN DIFFERENTIATING WHERE LIES THE SUBSTANCE OF A PEACE PROPOSAL AND WHERE LIE THE OTHER ASPECTS OF A PEACE PROPOSAL, WITH THE REAL AND DISTINCT OBJECTIVES OF EACH PROBLEM.

I ALSO UNDERSTAND FULLY THE NEED OF THE US PUBLIC OPINION, THE SUPPORT OF THE US CONGRESS, OR THE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. HOWEVER, I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND ALSO THAT, SOMETIMES A PROBLEM OUTSIDE OF VIET NAM CAN BE SEEN AS A HARMLESS FORTHCOMING INITIATIVE, BUT IN VIET NAM IT IS REGARDED AS A GREAT DANGER FOR THE WHOLE NATION WITH CONSEQUENCES WE CANNOT FORESEE.

I AM TALKING HERE OF THE THREE-COMPONENT FORMULA BY ITSELF, WHETHER IT IS IN A GOVERNMENT WHICH THE COMMUNISTS HAVE ADVOCATED, OR UNDER ANY OTHER FORM OR IN ANY OTHER AGENCY, SUCH AS THE COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IN THE COUNTER-PROPOSAL DR. KISSINGER HAD SUBMITTED.

JUST A FEW DAYS BEFORE THEIR PRIVATE MEETING WITH DR. KISSINGER, THE COMMUNISTS HAD RELEASED THEIR STATEMENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11, AND SEPTEMBER 14, 72 ON THE NATIONAL CONCORD GOVERNMENT WITH THREE COMPONENTS SOLUTION. THIS HAS PROVOKED EXTREME INDIGNATION IN ALL GROUPS IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, AND WAS FLATLY REJECTED BY THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE.

THE FLAGRANT CONTRADICTION BETWEEN, ON ONE HAND THE FACT THE COMMUNISTS BOAST THAT THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE SHOULD BE RESPECTED AND ADVOCATE A THREE-COMPONENT GOVERNMENT WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, AND ON THE OTHER HAND THE FACT THEY TALK ABOUT THE POLITICAL REALITY IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND THEIR CLAIM THAT THERE ARE TWO GOVERNMENTS IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, HAS REVEALED THE DISHONEST CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNISTS WHO STILL NURTURE A MOST MACHIAVELLIAN SCHEME TO SET UP BY ALL MEANS A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN THIS COUNTRY.

WITH REGARD TO THE THIRD COMPONENT IN PARTICULAR, A CLEAR REFLECTION OF THE SO-CALLED THIRD FORCE WHICH THE COMMUNISTS AND THE COLONIALISTS HAVE OFTEN SPOKEN ABOUT PREVIOUSLY, WHETHER IT IS IN A DISGUISED COALITION GOVERNMENT OR IN ANY OTHER AGENCY, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE HAVE SEEN CLEARLY THAT IT IS THE PRODUCT OF THE FRENCH COLONIALISTS, AND THAT THOSE FRENCH COLONIALISTS WHO HAD BETRAYED THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE IN 1954, ONCE AGAIN WANT TO COLLUDE WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND SELL OUT THIS REMAINING PART OF VIET-NAM TO THEM

FINALLY, ANY SO-CALLED TRIPARTITE ARRANGEMENT ALSO MAKES THE SOUTH V No Objection to Declassification in Full 2013/01/03 : LOC-HAK-490-7-13-6 OTIAN SOLUTION WHICH WE CONSIDER AS MOST TRAGIC AND MOST DREADFUL FOR THE FATE OF THE COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION.

INDEED, THERE IS AN UNDISPUTABLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND THE COMMUNISTS. THAT DIFFERENCE LIES IN THE FACT THAT WE ADVOCATE THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED HONESTLY AND THAT WE ARE DETERMINED TO SEEK A WAY TO IMPLEMENT IT IN A SERIOUS MANNER, WHILE ON THE CONTRARY, THE COMMUNISTS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT AND USE IT AS A PRETEXT TO IMPOSE WHAT THEY WANT, RATHER THAN TO SHOW THEIR GOODWILL TO IMPLEMENT IT.

I AVAIL MYSELF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE THAT TO ME, MY POSITION AND PERSONAL HONOR ARE MEANINGLESS COMPARED WITH PEACE FOR THE VIETNAMESE NATION AND THE GREAT SACRIFICES OF THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED STATES AND VIET-NAM IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD, PROVIDED THAT THESE SACRIFICES WERE NOT IN VAIN AND THAT PEACE WOULD NOT PROVOKE THE COLLAPSE IN THIS COUNTRY.

TO THIS DATE, AND MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, DUE TO YOUR POLICY AND DETERMINED ACTIONS, COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION BEGIN TO HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE IN THE LEADING NATION OF THE FREE WORLD, AND THEY BELIEVE THAT THE COMMUNISTS' POLICY OF ARMED AGGRESSION WOULD NOT BE ENCOURAGED ANYMORE,

HOWEVER, WE STILL THINK THAT THE COMMUNISTS SHOULD NOT BE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY A MORE INGENIOUS AND LESS EXPENSIVE METHOD TO TAKE OVER COUNTRIES THROUGH SO-CALLED NEGOTIATED AND POLITICAL PEACE SOLUTIONS AND USE THEM AS STANDARD FORMULAS IN EVERY COUNTRY, WITH THE SOLE CONDITION TO SEND TROOPS TO THREATEN THEM. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN THE CASE OF COUNTRIES WHICH LACK CAPABILITY TO DEFEND THEMSELVES, THE MOST VIVID AND TRAGIC EXAMPLE IS THE SOLUTION FOR LAOS.

THEREFORE, ( TO CONTINUE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO THE COMMUNISTS IN A VERY ILLOGICAL WAY SERVES ONLY TO ENCOURAGE THEM IN BEING MORE STUBBORN IN THEIR POSITION AND THEIR PURSUIT OF AGGRESSION. THIS ALSO IS ONE REASON WHY PEACE HAS NOT BEEN RESTORED EARLY. WE THINK THAT IN VIET-NAM, THE COMMUNISTS SHOULD ONCE FOR ALL ABANDON THEIR STUBB

ORN ATTITUDE. IT WOULD THEN HELP US SOLVE MANY PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE IN VARIOUS PLACES.

**TOP SECRET SENSITIVE**

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1972 SEP 16 AM 9 29

**TOP SECRET SENSITIVE 160926Z SEP 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)**  
**FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0159 IMMEDIATE**  
**TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER**  
**REF: SAIGON 0158**

**FINAL SECTION OF THREE**

FINALLY, COMING BACK TO THE COUNTER-PROPOSAL WHICH WE ARE DISCUSSING, I CONSIDER THAT WHILE THE COMMUNISTS ARE RELENTLESSLY LAUNCHING HIGH POINT MILITARY OFFENSIVES AFTER THE EXTREMELY CRUEL AND PREMEDITATED MASS KILLINGS OF INNOCENT PEOPLE IN BINH-LONG, BINH-DINH, AND QUANG-TRI OF WHICH YOU MUST HAVE HEARD, WHILE THEY CONTINUE TO SHELL AND WAGE THEIR TERRORISM TO THE UTMOST, TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO THEM ON ILLOGICAL MATTERS, THOUGH WE THINK IT IS ONLY AN INITIATIVE AND GUESS THAT IT HAS LITTLE CHANCE TO BE ACCEPTED, CAN ALSO CAUSE INTERNAL POLITICAL UNREST AND CHAOS DETRIMENTAL TO THE WHOLE STRUGGLE AND THE FATE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM.

I FEEL CERTAIN YOU AGREE WITH ME THAT THIS IS NOT WHAT WE HAVE PURSUED THROUGHOUT THESE YEARS. IT WILL NOT HELP IN RESTORING PEACE FOR VIET-NAM AND THIS PART OF THE WORLD; RATHER, IT WILL HAVE WASTED

COUNTLESS SACRIFICES IN HUMAN LIVES AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF BOTH THE AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE PEOPLE.

I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND MY SINCERITY. I HAVE WITH THIS LONG LETTER TAKEN MUCH OF YOUR TIME IN THESE ARDUOUS WEEKS OF CAMPAIGNING; I, HOWEVER, WISH YOU A BRILLIANT REELECTION TO CONTINUE TO LEAD THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES AND HAVE ALL THE MEANS TO FULFILL YOUR EAGER ASPIRATION WHICH IS TO RESTORE PEACE AND STABILITY TO THE WORLD AND AT THE SAME TIME PROMOTE AN ERA OF DEVELOPMENT, NOT BY HATRED BUT THR

GH COOPERATION.

WITH WARM PERSONAL REGARDS,  
THIEU (SIGNATURE)

HIS EXCELLENCY RICHARD M. NIXON  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON D.C.

**TOP SECRET SENSITIVE**